

# Innovations for Poverty Action: *Inaugural Report - Strengthening Environmental Sustainability*

Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) is committed to integrating environmental sustainability into our poverty reduction efforts. We believe it is necessary to conduct our activities in a way that respects and protects the environment, and we are committed to transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement in our environmental performance.

## Copyright

Copyright 2024 Innovations for Poverty Action. This publication is available as a PDF on the Innovations for Poverty Action website under a Creative Commons license that allows copying and distributing the publication, only in its entirety, as long as it is attributed to Innovations for Poverty Action and used for noncommercial educational or public policy purposes. Photographs may not be used separately from the publication.

## Policy Overview

IPA's Environmental and Sustainability Policy, issued in September 2023, aims to minimize and mitigate the negative impact on the environment arising as a direct or indirect result of its operation through:

- **Education and Engagement:** Empowering staff with the knowledge and tools to advocate for and implement sustainable practices
- **Sustainable Supply Chain:** Including environmental considerations in the procurement processes and supplier selection, opting for local sourcing whenever possible
- **Resource Management:** Monitoring and managing the consumption of energy and natural resources efficiently
- **Waste Reduction:** Assessment of waste produced and implementation of recycling and waste generation reduction strategies

## Goals and Objectives

Aligned with global best practices, IPA's environmental objectives include:

- Reducing dependency on single-use plastics and promoting recycling across all operations
- Implementing comprehensive waste management protocols to ensure the responsible disposal of e-waste
- Establishing a framework for regular environmental performance reviews and public reporting to enhance transparency and stakeholder engagement

## 2023 Baseline Results and Initiatives

In our commitment to provide transparent data about IPA’s environmental performance and measure our gradual progress, we conducted a survey from IPA’s global offices. The survey highlights key areas of environmental impact and current practices:

- **Resource Usage:** Offices have started implementing a decrease in paper usage, with a now average of 89 reams of paper purchased, highlighting a shift towards digital alternatives.
- **Waste Management:** A significant number of offices (47.62%) now have recycling facilities, setting a strong foundation for waste reduction.
- **Carbon Offset Initiatives:**
  - All accommodations booked through IPA’s designated travel agent are carbon offset, demonstrating a commitment to reducing travel-related environmental impacts.
  - Starting in 2024, IPA has committed to offsetting 10% of our flight emissions as part of a long-term strategy to achieve complete offsetting by 2050. In 2023, IPA recorded 738.380 kg of carbon dioxide travel-related emissions. The large majority of it (97%) was for long-haul and international travel and with a very small fraction of train travel.

We have embraced virtual conferencing to minimize travel-related emissions, a crucial step towards reducing our carbon footprint. In line with our commitment to sustainability, we are launching a more structured research sector on the environment, fostering a culture of awareness and continuous improvement as a public good. The digital transformation of our processes is underway, further reducing our reliance on paper through the adoption of digital data collection and management systems. Additionally, sustainability training is integrated into our onboarding process, with annual refreshers to keep our team informed and engaged in best environmental practices.

In our ongoing efforts to enhance environmental stewardship, the following table outlines the key performance indicators for our environmental action plan. IPA is committed to tracking and reporting on these metrics which is an essential step for monitoring our progress in reducing our ecological footprint, promoting sustainability, and ensuring compliance across our operations. By focusing on these crucial areas, we aim to lead by example in the non-governmental organization sector, demonstrating our commitment to responsible environmental practices.

Objectives	Activities
<b>Waste: Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle</b>	Reduce the amount of paper used
	Limit the use of one-way plastic water bottles
	Recycle all appropriate materials

<b>Energy and Natural Resources</b>	Track carbon emissions from international flights
	Offset at least 10% of carbon emissions generated from travel
<b>Encourage Behavioral Shift</b>	Train staff on environmental policy
	Use communications to highlight environmental issues
	Ensure subcontractors adhere to environmental policies

## Vision for the Future

IPA is committed to continual improvement in our environmental performance. We recognize our responsibility to measure and mitigate the impact on the environment arising as a direct or indirect result of our operations. With a clear policy and concrete steps towards sustainability, IPA is actively enhancing our operational and environmental efficiency, tracking and reporting annually on key environmental performance metrics relevant to provide transparency and enhance accountability.

Looking ahead, we are planning to expand our environmental initiatives to include more comprehensive strategies. We will implement a green procurement policy that ensures all our purchasing decisions—from office supplies to research equipment—meet high environmental standards. This policy will also extend to the procurement of flights and accommodations, where we are already considering greener options to further reduce our ecological footprint. Additionally, we use a reputed partner’s methodology for calculating the carbon footprint of each research project, setting measurable goals to minimize these impacts progressively. Engaging local communities in our research areas will also be a key focus, supporting and integrating local environmental initiatives into our broader research objectives to enhance sustainability on a community level.